

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

This is in response to the Office action dated January 28, 2004 rejecting original claims 1-11. Independent claims 1, 6 and 8 and dependent claim 5 are amended, and claims 9-11 are canceled herein. Claims 1-8 are thus pending.

Specification

The Examiner stated in the Office action that an abstract on a separate sheet is required pursuant to 37 CFR 1.72(b). [p.2.] Applicant submits herewith an abstract.

Drawings

In the Office action, the Examiner objected to Fig. 1 as illustrating only that which is old. [p.2.] A proposed drawing correction and replacement drawing to Fig. 1 is submitted herewith. Withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. 112

The Examiner rejects claims 9-11 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph. Applicant herein cancels claims 9-11.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. 112

The Examiner rejects claims 1-8 under 35 USC 102 in view of US Patent 5,865,546 (Ganthier).

The invention as described in each of the independent claims 1, 6 and 8 herein includes a computer keyboard comprising a foundation into which various removable inserts can be placed and connected to provide for different functionalities such as computer games, internet search facilities. More specifically, the keyboard can be used as an input device for a host computer that can execute one or more software applications. The keyboard can further include a removable part as claimed with a set of specific keys each of which interacts through non-electrical means to a corresponding contact and held by a foundation.

[Application, pp.19-20; Fig. 5.] Each key can also interact with a corresponding contact on the fixed part in a one-to-one correspondence. [See Fig. 5.] The removable part can be associated with a specific software application to be executed on the host computer. Other distinguishable features of the invention are further recited in the pending claims.

Meanwhile, the keyboard in Gauthier operates differently than the invention herein as claimed. The keys in Gauthier are connected through connectors (105) to electrical switching devices in a fixed part (keyboard shell 102) by an electrical connection. The connector in Gauthier has a blade 135 that "includes multiple electrical contacts as shown." [col.5, lns.23-25.] Accordingly, "[c]ontacts in the slots of female connectors 105, 111, 115, 121 mate with contacts on the blades thereby providing an electrical path for the signals between the input device modules (130-160) and the keyboard shell 102." [col.5, lns.39-43.]

The non-electrical connection between the keyboard keys and contacts are neither described nor suggested in Gauthier. This type of improvement over prior keyboard designs provides certain cost advantages since non-electrical connection means can eliminate the need for costly microprocessors in the removable parts.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of independent claims 1, 6 and 8 be withdrawn. Because the dependent claims related thereto include further limitations in addition to those recited in their corresponding independent claim, Applicant believes that all depending claims are also allowable over the cited references of record.

The cited references of record neither disclose nor suggest the invention as presently claimed when considered individually or in combination with one another. Accordingly, allowance of all pending claims 1-8 is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

It is submitted that the present application is in form for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner have any questions, please contact the undersigned attorney.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees, which may be required, including petition fees and extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 23-2415 (Docket No. 27986-713).

Respectfully submitted,

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